

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

**by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic  
and the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic**

Today we, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, Giorgia Meloni, and the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, met in Rome on the occasion of the second bilateral Summit of the Governments of the Italian Republic and the Hellenic Republic, celebrating the deep friendship between our Nations, closest partners and Allies.

Here in Rome, we agreed the following in order to strengthen this strategic relationship and increase opportunities for enhanced cooperation, bilaterally and internationally:

### **BILATERAL RELATIONS**

#### **Economy**

We agree to seek together new opportunities for our enterprises, including SMEs, and promote our cooperation for joint initiatives and ventures and increase mutual investments. In this regard, we welcome the many occasions where the thriving dialogue between our business communities takes place.

We agree to promote B2B relations for the two Nations via investments of Greek and Italian companies and create supportive mechanism.

#### **Energy**

We consider the energy sector key for economic development and job creation, with a specific focus on natural gas, electricity, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage (CCS), connectivity and renewable sources, and adhering to the principle of technological neutrality.

Italy and Greece are a natural energy bridge between the Mediterranean and Europe by virtue of our geographical location, our cooperative projection, and the valuable contribution of our enterprises. We boast a rich diversification of energy routes – such as natural gas pipelines and electricity cables – and sources, of crucial value for common security and energy resilience for the whole European continent.

#### **Environment**

We intend to further strengthen our cooperation in preventing and tackling wildfires and in preserving our lands and seas from extreme natural phenomena and the consequences of climate change. We also renew our commitment to effective implementation of the Barcelona Convention for protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean, and we will continue to work together for a healthy Mediterranean Sea.

#### **Mobility - Interconnectivity - Innovation**

We intend to strengthen the joint development of interconnections also through transport network projects developing and enhancing supply chains and improving passenger mobility, both on land and at sea, in the framework of safe and digitalised infrastructures, affirming in this

context also our continued support to the IMEEC project. Both Nations remain committed to safeguarding maritime security, which is a key element for the achievement of the above goals.

We intend to mobilize financial and technical resources and support and monitor B2B investments towards strengthening safety on railways, achieving interoperability goals, upgrading traffic and further improving of the services provided to the public. In this context, we welcome all the investments in the Greek railway system and in new rolling stock, as agreed upon and outlined in the Memorandum of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation signed today between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of the Hellenic Republic and Hellenic Train Railway Company Société Anonyme, member of the Italian State-owned group Ferrovie dello Stato.

In Telecommunications, including submarine data cables, 5G/6G networks, and data centres, Greece and Italy intend to continue cooperating on relevant projects, including the BlueMed and GreenMed projects, to enhance interconnectivity and ensure secure and high-capacity data exchange to support economic growth and digital autonomy, while ensuring national security. We also intend to work together to improve the monitoring, the resilience and the protection of submarine cables in the Mediterranean.

Greece and Italy recognise the strategic imperative of deepening their cooperation in emerging technologies, such as AI, to address shared challenges and act as key drivers of innovation and security in the Mediterranean.

In Cybersecurity, both Nations will collaborate to strengthen resilience against cyber threats, protecting critical infrastructure and digital sovereignty through information sharing, capacity-building, and coordinated response mechanisms.

### **Defence, Security and Civil protection**

We are committed to further enhancing our cooperation in the defence and security field, including between our defence industries, and to further collaborating in fighting transnational organised crime, combating human trafficking, and countering illicit traffics. We also intend to support joint activities aimed at combating trafficking in narcotic drugs and precursor chemicals.

We intend to enhance coordination, and are determined to also strengthen operational collaboration in the field of civil protection, which can greatly enhance life-saving efforts and contributes to increased people's safety in cases of natural and man-made disasters.

### **Culture**

We reaffirm our commitment to strengthening our cultural cooperation, which dates back to ancient times, rooted in our shared history spanning centuries, by building upon the activities advancing the work of our cultural institutions and promoting collaboration in the fields of museum exchanges, preservation and conservation of cultural heritage – including underwater cultural heritage – and contemporary culture. We also reiterate our joint dedication to addressing global challenges, such as illicit trafficking of cultural property and the impact of climate change on cultural heritage.

We welcome the organization of the exhibition “Painted Gold. El Greco and the Art between Crete and Venice” at the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia in 2025. We equally welcome the designation of Italy as the Guest Country of Honour at the 2025 Thessaloniki Book Fair as well as the participation of Greece in the Bologna Children’s Book Fair.

### **Education and Research**

We will work together to foster the teaching of our respective languages in our school systems, and also to further enhance bilateral cooperation in scientific research and higher education. We also intend to strengthen the common study programmes and the joint degrees developed and awarded by both Greek and Italian higher education institutions. We will foster long-standing cooperation in the field of Large Research Infrastructures, also by supporting priority initiatives such as the Einstein Telescope (ET), working together within the ET Board of Governmental Representatives (BGR) in order to support the construction of the ET gravitational waves observatory in Sos Enattos (Sardinia, Italy).

### **Tourism**

We are determined to work together to further expand our role in the global tourism market, while enhancing the economic, environmental and social sustainability of tourism.

## **EU AGENDA**

### **Southern Neighbourhood, Pact for the Mediterranean, Enlargement**

We are committed to further promoting, also through the new EU Pact for the Mediterranean, closer cooperation with the countries of the Southern Neighbourhood, in particular in the fields of energy, digital transformation, migration flows, civil protection, blue economy, economic integration, youth and civil society.

We stress the continued importance of enlargement as a geostrategic investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity. We will work together, including in the framework of the “Friends of the Western Balkans”, to support a dynamic and credible accession process of the Western Balkan partners to the EU, as per agreed conditions, also by further advancing gradual integration between the EU and the region, in a merit-based and reversible manner, on the way to full membership. Pursuing regional reconciliation and good neighbourly relations remain fundamental in order to ensure smooth and effective progress in the process. We confirm our contributions to NATO and EU missions in the region, recognizing its strategic importance for the entire Continent.

### **Irregular Migration**

Italy and Greece, being both first-country-of-entry, bear the burden of unsustainable levels of irregular migration into Europe and share the same challenges. We can make progress only by working more closely together through a whole-of-EU response. The development of the external dimension is essential for success in tackling irregular migration in the long term. We will work together to ensure correct and balanced implementation of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, adhering fully to the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility. We also look forward to developing innovative solutions to tackle irregular migration, such as the Italy-Albania

agreement. We attach great relevance to the reinforcement of the concepts of Safe Country of Origin and Safe Third Country. We welcome the Commission's proposal to revise the relevant legislative framework and we are committed to a swift approval of the newly presented proposal of the return regulation. Furthermore, we support a swift adoption of an EU list of safe countries of origin and safe third countries.

### **EU Security and Defence**

We believe it is essential for the European Union to take more responsibility for the security of European citizens. We are committed to strengthening the Common European Foreign and Security Policy and European Union's defence capabilities with a view to promoting EU's strategic autonomy, making the EU an effective global actor and a credible security provider. At the same time, we emphasize the importance of advancing the EU's defence industrial base to support the development of cutting-edge military technologies and capabilities, including through cooperation with third like-minded countries, while taking into account the security and defence interests of all EU member states.

The development of the European Union's defence capabilities and industrial base should take place in cooperation and full complementarity with NATO. To face rising costs, we call for greater EU ambition, starting from the best use of all available resources, a greater role of the European Investment Bank, public financing and private investments, the exclusion of military spending from deficit calculations under the revised European economic governance, and the development of new common instruments, including a dedicated fund.

### **Competitiveness, Energy, Cohesion**

We confirm our resolve to strengthen the productivity and competitiveness of the EU economy, with a view to increasing long-term growth and bridging the gap between the EU and other major powers in critical areas such as research and innovation. In this regard we fully support fast and decisive progress on promoting simplification as a horizontal enabler, with special attention to SMEs and mid-cap companies, and on developing financial integration across the EU, with a particular focus on the Capital Markets Union, to mobilise savings, unlock the necessary investments and accelerate financial integration.

We support the development of a European industrial strategy that improves EU's attractiveness for investment, allows businesses to grow, and brings down energy prices. While continuing our efforts for a greener, more circular and more digital industry, we stress the need to strike the right balance between new key enabling technologies for EU strategic autonomy and more traditional industries that are in transition such as the automotive and shipping sectors.

We will strive to achieve a true Energy Union and promote physical interconnections and diversification of energy sources, routes and supplies as a mean to reduce the price disparities among EU Member States, and to ensure affordable energy costs – an essential element of our competitiveness.

We reiterate our commitment to keeping and promoting the EU Cohesion Policy at the centre of a prosperous and competitive Europe, while preserving its core mission of promoting economic and social convergence.

We will explore innovative collaboration among EU Macro-Regional Strategies and Interreg programmes, including in the framework of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR).

### **Common Agricultural Policy**

Italy and Greece pursue the sustainability and competitiveness of a renewed and innovative CAP, including food security and simplified substantial support for small farmers. As natural disasters greatly affect agricultural production, we underline the need for special EU support for adaptation measures. We will safeguard traditional high-quality products and promote the principles of the Mediterranean Diet in the EU and international fora, also through closer coordination in protecting our geographical indications and supporting an EU labelling system based on sound scientific evidence.

While recognising the importance of EU's cooperation with third countries in the fishing sector, we emphasise the need to protect the interests of our fishermen and ensure the sustainability of fish stocks.

### **INTERNATIONAL ISSUES**

Italy and Greece, acknowledging the current and emerging challenges into the geopolitical environment, reaffirm their strong determination to continue working together to contribute to international peace, stability and security in the Mediterranean region and beyond, guided by the principles of international law, including UNCLOS.

We will work together in order to address regional and global challenges and promote multilateralism, also in view of Greece's participation, as an elected member, in the United Nations Security Council for the period 2025-2026.

We will continue to work together and in all relevant fora, including the MED9, to increase EU's and NATO's focus on the Mediterranean, our common strategic region. This will also entail support to adequate funding that matches our ambitions in the region, including via dedicated instruments.

We will increase our cooperation in NATO with a view to strengthening our Southern partners' security and defence institutions, capacities and resilience through the implementation of the Southern Neighbourhood Action Plan and full leverage of the Hub for the South.

We reaffirm our support to efforts to bring a just and lasting peace in Ukraine as soon as possible and to Ukraine's security, sovereignty and independence. We are determined to contribute to Ukraine's repair, recovery and reconstruction also in view of the Ukraine Recovery Conference that will be hosted by Italy in July 2025.

We will continue to work together to bring peace and stability to the Middle East, and we reconfirm our support for the full implementation of the ceasefire agreements in Gaza and

Lebanon and for a two-State solution with an independent Palestinian State living side by side with Israel in peace and security.

Italy and Greece, following the fall of Assad's regime, stand with the Syrian people in their pursuit of a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned peaceful and inclusive transition which will ensure the full integration and protection of all components of the Syrian society including all religious and ethnic communities. We stress the importance to create propitious conditions for the voluntary, dignified, safe and sustainable return of refugees to their homes in Syria.

We will continue to cooperate for the stability of Libya, supporting the UN-led political process. We are at the forefront of international efforts in addressing the Red Sea crisis, in particular in the framework of the EU naval operation ASPIDES.

We commit to fostering stronger and closer relations between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council and with the Gulf Countries, and to encouraging more structured cooperation and investments.

We recognise the importance to promote equitable partnerships with African Nations, contributing to sustainable socio-economic growth of the African Continent, in line with Italy's vision of the Mattei Plan for Africa and through joint efforts in the context of the European Global Gateway.

The following agreements and documents were signed on the occasion of the Summit:

1. Agreement between the Government of the Italian Republic and the Government of the Hellenic Republic concerning cooperation in matters of air policing measures against non-military air threats
2. Antidrug Operational Memorandum between the Central Directorate for Antidrug Services of the Department of Public Security of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Italy and the Police Headquarters of the Ministry of the Public Order and Citizen Protection of the Hellenic Republic
3. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of the Interior of the Italian Republic and the Ministry for Climate Crisis and Civil Protection of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the field of public rescue, fire prevention and fire-fighting activities
4. Technical arrangement between the Ministry of Citizen Protection of the Hellenic Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Italian Republic on the establishment of joint patrols for the protection of public order in tourist areas

5. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Development of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of industrial and SME policy
6. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Digital Governance of the Hellenic Republic on cooperation in the fields of digitalisation, space, information and communication technologies
7. Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of the Hellenic Republic
8. Memorandum of Understanding on Sports cooperation between the Department for Sport under the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports of the Hellenic Republic
9. Memorandum of Understanding between the Public Administration Department of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of the Interior of the Hellenic Republic in the field of public administration reform and innovation
10. Memorandum of Understanding between the National Cybersecurity Agency of the Italian Republic and the National Cyber Security Authority of the Hellenic Republic in the area of cybersecurity
11. Memorandum of Understanding on agricultural research and cooperation between the Council for Agricultural Research and Economics (CREA) and the Benaki Phytopathological Institute (BPI)
12. Joint Statement on cooperation in the field of civil protection by the Italian Republic and the Hellenic Republic
13. Memorandum of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation between the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport of the Hellenic Republic and Hellenic Train Railway Company Societe Anonyme

14. Memorandum of Understanding regarding the “New Electricity Interconnection Project between Greece and Italy – GR.ITA. 2” between TERNA Rete Elettrica Nazionale Società per Azioni and INDEPENDENT POWER TRANSMISSION OPERATOR S.A.

**Rome, 12th May 2025**